Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A fine feldspathic earthenware comprising a body and a glaze layer covering surfaces of said body, said body having water absorption percentage of not lower than 3% and lower than 15% and including an annular bottom formed on a bottom portion of the body, wherein an improvement comprises:

said glaze layer being absent on a surface of said annular bottom; ~~and~~

said surface of said annular bottom being covered with an annular vitrified layer which has substantially no water absorbing property;

said annular vitrified layer being formed of a composition that has a lower degree of refractoriness than said body and a higher degree of refractoriness than said glaze layer; and

said composition being vitrified when said body is biscuit-fired, and said composition not being fused when said body is glost-fired.

2. (Original) A fine feldspathic earthenware according to claim 1, wherein said annular vitrified layer has a radially inner end portion and a radially outer end portion which are covered with said glaze layer.

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Currently Amended) A fine feldspathic earthenware according to claim 1, wherein said ~~annular vitrified layer is formed of a~~ composition ~~including~~ comprises a component ~~which~~ that is vitrified at a temperature within a range of 1100-1300°C.

5. (Original) A fine feldspathic earthenware according to claim 1, wherein said annular vitrified layer has a thickness of not smaller than 1μm and smaller than 0.5mm.

6. (Original) A fine feldspathic earthenware according to claim 1, wherein a difference between average coefficients of thermal expansion of said body and said annular vitrified layer is within a range of $\pm 3 \times 10^{-6}$.

7. (Currently Amended) A fine feldspathic earthenware according to claim 1, wherein said ~~annular vitrified layer is formed from a~~ said composition ~~including~~ comprises 45-80% by weight of SiO_2, 10-40% by weight of Al_2O_3, and a total of 3-15% by weight of K_2O and Na_20.

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Withdrawn) A process of manufacturing a fine feldspathic earthenware comprising a body and a glaze layer covering surfaces of said body, said body having water absorption percentage of not lower than 3% and lower than 15% and including an annular bottom formed on a bottom portion of the body, said process comprising:

a forming step of forming a precursor of said body such that said precursor of said body has a precursor of said annular bottom;

a coating step of coating a surface of said precursor of said annular bottom with a composition having a lower degree of refractoriness than that of said precursor of said body; and

a biscuit-firing step of biscuit-firing said precursor of said body with said composition covering said surface of said precursor of said annular bottom, whereby said body is formed with said annular bottom the surface of which is covered with an annular vitrified layer which is formed of said composition and which has substantially no water absorbing property.

10. (Withdrawn) A process according to claim 9, further comprising a step of positioning a plurality of pieces of said precursor of said body in a stack such that adjacent

ones of said pieces are spaced apart from each other by a refractory setter, and wherein said pieces positioned in the stack are biscuit-fired in said biscuit-firing step.

11. (New) A fine feldspathic tableware comprising a body and a glaze layer covering surfaces of said body, said body having water absorption percentage of not lower than 3% and lower than 15% and including an annular bottom formed on a bottom portion of the body, wherein an improvement comprises:

said glaze layer being absent on a surface of said annular bottom;

said surface of said annular bottom being covered with an annular vitrified layer which has substantially no water absorbing property;

said annular vitrified layer being formed of a composition that has a lower degree of refractoriness than said body and a higher degree of refractoriness than said glaze layer; and

said composition being vitrified when said body is biscuit-fired, and said composition not being fused when said body is glost-fired.